

Cowal Transport Forum Update from Contract Officer, Argyll and Bute Council

NHS request for further bus services serving Cowal Community Hospital

The transport team have fielded a request from the NHS regards the provision of an enhanced bus service providing half hourly links from the centre of Dunoon to Cowal Community Hospital. Current provision is hourly, which does not always match appointment schedules.

A draft timetable has been produced and sent to NHS colleagues, and the details of the funding requirement for this have also been sent to the NHS for information and consideration.

Community Requests – West Cowal

A community interest group has made the following requests for consideration:

- Better connections for Otter Ferry and Kilfinnan residents to travel to and from Dunoon.
- Service 477 from West Cowal to Rothesay has been well received – the community have requested a possible longer stay in Rothesay before the return journey.
- Suggestion for the Service 490 to cross over on the ferry from Bute and connect with Service 478 at Auchenbreck to reduce journey times for passengers from Portavadie, Millhouse, Kames, Tighnabraich et al into Dunoon and vice versa.

North Campbell Road

In-line with the above noted community request, we are also discussing with West Coast Motors options for bus services serving North Campbell Road. Currently there are challenges with the larger service buses accessing North Campbell Road due to difficulties navigating the turning at the top of the hill, the result being buses grounding out and damaging the road surface. A possible solution may involve the smaller Pingo-sized bus, but would have to be cost neutral to the local authority.

Strachur Saturday Afternoon Service

In-line with the above noted community request, we are discussing with West Coast Motors the possibility of Saturday afternoon services to Strachur in line with the weekday service. As with North Campbell Road, and the West Cowal community requests, these would have to remain cost-neutral.

Request from Kerris of the Kilmun Community Council - The community is looking for later weekend bus's along the shore villages (Dunoon to Ardentinny).

As noted in correspondence following the last Cowal Transport. Whilst it is unlikely that we will be able to extend bus services much beyond their current times, due to a fixed budget, this will be considered along with the above noted requests, as part of an overall review of Cowal bus services.

Dunoon Grammar School/Hostel transport from West Cowal

We have had representation from the parents of pupils regarding the luggage capacity on the vehicle transporting pupils to Dunoon Grammar School Hostel. The current vehicle is a PSV service bus, which has air-conditioning, high back seats, USB charging points and is crucially far more accessible for pupils. However, feedback from parents has indicated that luggage capacity is a

concern of theirs. The operator is currently getting quotes for the installation of additional luggage racking on these vehicles.

Updates on all of the above will be given to the next Cowal Transport Forum in the new year. If there are any queries or feedback on the above points, then please do not hesitate to let me know.